



## MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS OF BRENTHAM SOCIETY AND BRENTHAM HERITAGE SOCIETY

Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006, 7.30pm, Brentham Club

**Residents in attendance:** 62 including Committee

**BHS Members in attendance:** 16 including Committee

**Committee Members present:**

**Brentham Society:** Tony Miller (Chair), Sean Cadogan, Richard Costella (Treasurer), Heather Moore, Martin Mortimore, Barry Murphy

**Brentham Heritage Society:** Sue Elliott (Chair), Richard Costella (Treasurer), Eleanor Cowie (Secretary), Heather Moore

**Also Present:** Steve Pound, MP (part); Councillor Diana Pagan, Mayor of Ealing; Bob Gurd, Chair of Ealing Civic Society

**Apologies:** Pippa Kelly (BS)

**The meeting was in two parts:**

### **PART 1: TALK BY DR JONATHAN OATES**

Sue Elliott introduced Dr Oates, Ealing Borough Archivist and Local History Librarian, who gave an illustrated talk on '**Vintage Murder in North Ealing**', based on his book *Foul Deeds and Suspicious Deaths in Ealing*, and answered questions from the floor. Sue thanked him for his fascinating presentation, after which signed copies of the book were available.

### **PART 2: MAIN BUSINESS**

#### **1. Minutes of the 2005 AGM and Matters Arising:**

Speaking on behalf of Jenny Arnell, Brentham Club Chair, Tony Arnell commented that detailed plans of the revised proposals for Club development did now exist and were on view upstairs in the Club, where they could be viewed by residents, including non-members of the Club. Tony Miller confirmed that the Brentham Society, while preserving its independence to comment on the proposals, wanted to work together with the Club, and that an article in *Brentham News* had drawn residents' attention to the fact that the plans were on view.

There were no other matters arising from the minutes and these were accepted as a true record of the meeting – proposed by Anne Barnes, seconded by Peter Bigwood.

## **2. Chairs' Reports**

### **(a) Brentham Society (BS) – Tony Miller**

#### **Highlights:**

The big event of 2006 had been the May Day centenary. A record turnout of both children and spectators had the good fortune to witness a special celebration. Special thanks were due to those who helped make it a memorable occasion, in particular the *ad hoc* May Day committee of Pat Chapman and Pat Baxendale. Offers of help well in advance of the day were needed to ensure the event continues in future.

#### **Membership:**

This was up again on 2005 – 51% of Brentham households were now paid up, representing 346 members (in 2005 the figures were 49% or 338); this was the highest figure since Debbi and Sean Cadogan took on the job five years ago, when membership stood at 41%. In addition, there were 33 Friends of Brentham.

Donations were down slightly – 113 (33% of members) gave an extra contribution (2005: 136/40%). Friends gave a further £109, making £1,331 in total. Tony expressed thanks to all who donated, thereby helping to keep membership fees down to only £2 per household. Members were asked to encourage other residents to join.

Tony expressed his thanks to all the collectors and street reps, and especially to Sean and Debbi for organising membership and preparing revised 'new residents' packs. Sean and Debbi were now standing down and we owed them a special debt of gratitude.

After an enjoyable social event for all helpers, we now had a full slate of collectors, street reps and newsletter deliverers, while Barbara Murray had kindly agreed to take over the Friends of Brentham. However no replacements had yet been found for the posts of Membership Secretary and Street Rep. Organiser.

#### **Newsletter and Communications:**

**Newsletter:** As Editor, Michael McCarthy had carried on the excellent work of Alan Henderson, who had continued to assist with advice and practical help. The new A4 colour format had been well received, and there had been 'News Updates' as necessary.

We remained indebted to Grimshaws for their sponsorship, which had enable us to maintain the high quality of the document with colour, to accompany the expansion in editorial content. Contributions were still always welcome about news and events – to Michael, please.

**Noticeboards:** David Webster had kept up the posting of notices advertising not only BS and BHS events but also local events of interest to residents. Tony Mackersie had kindly checked the condition of the boards, refurbishing them where necessary.

**Website:** The website launched last year had continued under the watchful eye of Wendy Sender. The virtual tour of the estate with pictures of every property, based on the photographic survey which she completed last year, had proved its worth in helping with planning issues, as well as being of more general interest.

#### **Planning and Environment:**

**Planning:** Tony commented that this was a very important issue for Brentham, where sensitive development was required. Planning issues were dealt with by Heather Moore and himself. Heather continued to monitor and comment to the Planning Department on all applications received, and these had continued at an increasing rate – last year the total topped 60, ranging from permission for tree work to new extensions and dormers.

Most were uncontroversial, approved with minimal changes, but some needed more substantial revision to meet Brentham's special requirements. He reminded residents that prior consultation saves time and effort, and in particular avoids enforcement action.

The BS continued to work with independent Conservation Panel and the new Council Conservation Manager (Graham Tite), who now had additional staff, the majority of whom were permanent. After a whole year, a revised Article 4(2) for Brentham would go to the Regulator Committee meeting next week. It would then be circulated to all residents before ratification, hopefully by the year-end.

**Policy and Design Guide :** A draft was in preparation to update the 1988 version, however, the work had been delayed, as the Council had been required to embark on a whole series of appraisals for all 29 conservation areas in the Borough, and these had taken precedence. A revised area appraisal for Brentham would be started next year and the BS would continue to apply pressure.

**Enforcement:** Some builders were still cutting corners and not working to approved plans. Unapproved changes were subject to enforcement action. The Council's Enforcement department had recently been strengthened and it appeared that enforcement would be a greater priority in future. The BS can help with advice if needed.

Tony reminded residents that, in the interests of maintaining the character of Brentham, virtually any change to the outside of houses, including repairs and paintwork, hedges, fences, gates and walls needs Planning Permission. **If in doubt, ask.**

#### **Events and Activities:**

As well as the May Day procession and celebrations, there had been the usual full calendar of events, from Carol Singing to the annual Family Cycle in July, which took place on one of the hotter days of the year!

The Strawberry Tea continued to be a high point in the local calendar and was well attended; it was difficult to avoid a clash with the PCA's Party in the Park, but people came to it anyway, including Steve Pound and local councillors. Our thanks once more to Barbara Murray for the use of her garden.

Brentham Open Garden Day had again attracted a good attendance. In weather which cleared up at just the right time, around 150 people visited ten gardens, several of them open for the first time. Entry fees grossed a record £474 and, after expenses, £462 was donated to the Shooting Star Trust for maintenance of their gardens. Thanks were due to all, especially to Nita Davis for her careful organisation and to those who opened their gardens and provided teas.

#### **Relations with Local Organisations:**

The BS continued to work for closer co-operation with the Pitshanger Community Association and the Brentham Club, even if unfortunately this had not prevented a clash of AGM dates.

The BS would take part in the steering group for the new Safer Neighbourhood police team for Hanger Hill, and Tony was on the Community & Police Consultative Group's management committee. A revived Neighbourhood Watch for the area was also planned.

During the year, the Brentham Club Regeneration Board had reluctantly come to the conclusion that they could not raise the necessary finance for the plans to redevelop the Club premises. Instead, the Club had prepared more limited refurbishment plans, which had been submitted to the Council for approval. Changes were being asked for by the planners, and by English Heritage, which would be reported on in due course.

#### **Projects:**

Last year the BS asked for Members' views on priorities for action. As a result the BS:

- did a survey of street signs, kindly undertaken by Graham Fox. Work on repair and replacement would start soon, pending Council approval
- ordered new merchandise, including a Brentham centenary bag which was very popular at May Day
- helped the BHS with the book reprint and the DVD launch (see BHS report)
- took out collective membership of Ealing Civic Society
- helped the Garden group with the costs of a visiting speaker
- investigated the provision of skips for back area clearance, as suggested by Krys Mackersie. However, it was concluded that there was insufficient demand to warrant the high cost
- did a Street Lighting study (see page 6 for Summary of Tony Miller's presentation)

#### **Future work:**

Suggestions were invited; one item already proposed was a review of energy efficiency measures and how these can be compatible with conservation requirements.

Finally Tony emphasised that all work depends on members' help; full participation from residents was needed to keep the BS going and he urged members to come forward and volunteer.

/continued

## 2. Chairs' Reports, cont.

### (b) Brentham Heritage Society (BHS) – Sue Elliott

Sue reminded those present that the BHS is the charity offshoot of the BS and exists to inform and educate the public about Brentham. The Committee was a small group of four members and one co-opted.

The past year had been one of consolidation. The BHS had started the last year with two major projects to see through – the book reprint and the DVD – alongside its normal educational activities.

#### **Reprint:**

750 copies of a slightly updated Brentham book with a new title had been delivered at the end of January. Many thanks were due to Bea and Walter Wyeth at Pitshanger Books for storing them all, as well as selling them! It was due to their help that the reprint was possible at all; not only had they provided the encouragement to reprint, but had also offered storage, and their advance payment on 200 copies had enabled the BHS to fund the project and stay solvent during a time of high outlay. Their support throughout was much appreciated. Sue reminded those present that the copies of the reprint were on sale in the Hall.

#### **DVD:**

*The Brentham Story*, the DVD made by Martin Mortimore, had been a major investment and a significant achievement. It captured the essence of Brentham and was an immediate success when launched in April, as we knew it would be. There had been admiring reviews and of the 750 copies cut, well over 300 had already been sold (including a number of complimentary copies to opinion formers and for publicity). Requests had come from as far afield as Sweden and Australia. Local estate agents had been invited to buy bulk copies at a discount as marketing tools and this offer had been taken up by Derek Grimshaw. Sue announced that the DVD was also on sale at the meeting. Any residents who would prefer a VHS video version had only to request one from Martin.

#### **Educational activities:**

**Visitors:** There had been visits by Prof. Ray Bromley from the US and Prof Hiroko Saito from Japan. Prof. Saito had subsequently conducted a survey of a sample of Brentham residents, the results of which had been published in the Newsletter.

**Publicity:** A publicity campaign for the Virtual Tour and the relaunched website had resulted in pieces in *West Side* and *Ealing Life*. Sue also mentioned that the *Time Out* publication 'London for Londoners' had featured Brentham, with a picture of Brentham Way and mention of "stunning" cottages in Meadvale Road. A BHS entry had been established on Guidestar, the official Charity Commission website for all registered UK charities.

**Schools Packs:** Additional Schools Packs were provided to local independent schools: Notting Hill, St. Benedict's and St. Augustine's Priory. These had been well received and were in addition to the packs previously given to State schools.

**Open House:** Thanks were due to Jackie Moss and Clive Hicks for their contribution to the tours round the estate for the London Open House Weekend. A successful innovation this year had been Clive's extra walk just for Brentham residents in the preceding week, which was taken up by 21 people.

**Website:** This had been kept up-to-date and lively by Webmaster Wendy Sender with technical assistance from husband Peter. The Brentham Forum had been launched for online exchange of news and views.

**Visit:** Finally, to educate ourselves the BHS had organised a visit to Kelmscott, the country home of William Morris, in June. This was a wonderful house and an informative tour and thanks were due to Eleanor Cowie for organising it.

#### **Future Projects:**

- The BHS will lobby English Heritage to get a Blue Plaque for Fred Perry, who becomes eligible in 2009; this project was carried over from last year.
- Print projects – producing postcards from archive photos
- Producing a leaflet on Brentham architecture
- Building up the BHS's depleted finances through book and DVD sales.

Sue concluded by saying that the very small BHS Committee would be grateful for any additional help that residents could give.

### **3. Treasurer's Report (Richard Costella)**

Copies of the Accounts had been distributed to those present. Richard said that this had been an unusual year for both Societies, as both had spent more than they had received in income.

#### **(a) Brentham Society**

BS subscriptions were higher than in 2005, mainly because they had been distorted by some late subscriptions from last year.

Most of the other income had come from regular BS events, and these were successful this year. As Tony had said, the BS now donates the proceeds from some events to charity.

On the expenditure side, the May Day celebrations stood out, but these had mostly been funded by sales of merchandise on the day. The Society had spent more on Newsletters this year to cover special events and updates, while Grimshaws had continued to cover the majority of the regular costs. There had been some expenses on repairing signs, notice boards and the bench on the Vivian Green. The BS had also made a contribution to the website, and had purchased new merchandise.

Richard explained that as regards grass cutting on Denison Green, the BS acted as banker for monies collected from the residents, holding the money and paying out as required.

Overall, payments had exceeded receipts by £729, but he assured members that the Society had adequate reserves.

#### **(b) Brentham Heritage Society**

Sales of the book and the DVD had gone well, many through Pitshanger Books. The BHS were grateful for a donation from the PCA towards the cost of the DVD.

The main expenditure was on the book reprint and the DVD, providing the basis for income in the future. A final payment had been made for the photographic survey.

Overall, payments had exceeded receipts by £10,771, which had depleted the Society's reserves at the time (this was planned!), but steady income from sales of the DVD and book had now replenished them.

As always, both sets of accounts had been audited by an independent auditor, and Richard thanked Andy Akerman from Meadvale Road for his help.

Adoption of the accounts was proposed by Pam Turner, seconded by Alan Henderson and agreed nem con.

### **4. Election of Committees 2006-07:**

#### **(a) Brentham Society**

The Constitution allows for eight members and up to two co-opted members. Pippa Kelly had been co-opted onto the Committee during the year. The following members were willing to stand again: Tony Miller (Chair), Sean Cadogan, Richard Costella (Treasurer), Heather Moore, Martin Mortimore and Barry Murphy.

The election of Pippa Kelly was proposed by Tony Miller, seconded by Heather Moore and approved by those present. Election of the remaining members of the Committee en bloc was proposed by Graham Fox, seconded by Pam Tuner and agreed unanimously.

Tony Miller appealed for anyone who would be prepared to be co-opted to speak to him after the meeting.

#### **(b) Brentham Heritage Society**

The Constitution allows for between four and nine members. The following members were willing to stand again: Sue Elliott (Chair), Eleanor Cowie (Secretary), Richard Costella (Treasurer), and Heather Moore. As no nominations for new members had been received, election of the Committee en bloc was proposed by Anne Barnes, seconded by Pat Baxendale and the Committee was duly elected.

### **5. Garden Awards**

Tony Miller thanked Brian Vaughan for once again judging the gardens and expressed Brian's thanks to Maureen Monaghan for her help with the judging. The winners of the three awards, for the Spring, Summer and Autumn seasons, and the Rose Bowl for overall excellence, were as follows:

<u>Award</u>	<u>Winner</u>	<u>Runners-up</u>
Spring	67 Meadvale Road	27 Denison Road, 35 Ludlow Road, 57 Meadvale Road
Summer	111 Fowlers Walk	54 Meadvale Road, 61 Fowlers Walk, 30 Holyoake Walk
Autumn	71 Meadvale Road	119 Fowlers Walk, 93 Fowlers Walk, 34 Brentham Way

The Rose Bowl was awarded to 10 Neville Road.

## 6. Members' Questions

Pam Turner proposed a vote of thanks to Tony Miller, Sue Elliott and the Committees of both Societies for their hard work. As there were no other questions, Tony Miller thanked residents for attending and the meeting closed at 10.15pm.

### Presentation on Street Lights – Tony Miller

#### Background:

Street lights are being renewed across the whole of the Borough, under the Council's PFI contract with EdF. The entire project is to last five years and we are now one year in; the first replacements will be on Meadvale Road in 2007. Although the Conservation Panel was consulted three years ago about alternative lanterns and columns, unfortunately it now appears that what is likely to be installed is not the same as the choice they made.

#### Council Consultation:

The Brentham Conservation Panel preferred to retain some existing cast-iron standards refurbished, but mainly to opt for a simple 5m Newcastle column with the Strand B lantern (globe pendant lamp on swan-neck). However, when the Council agreed the PFI contract with EdF to replace all street lights across the borough, they decided that the 'Heritage' option for 5m columns in conservation areas was too costly and that the whole of Brentham should have Strand B lanterns on 6m columns, rather than 5m. They also decided on the slightly fancier Oxford column.

#### The Issues:

6m columns would be obtrusive and out-of-proportion to the smaller houses. Other Councils, e.g. Hounslow and Camden, have agreed to provide simple 5m columns in conservation areas. But in Ealing the PFI budget is fixed, and the cash for changes very limited. Cast-iron Heritage columns are much more expensive than standard steel, and 20% more 5m columns than 6m ones would need to be installed to meet current lighting standards.

#### Options:

Brentham is not a homogeneous area but is planned to have all the same lights. We should use our local knowledge to influence the choice of lamps and standards best suited to the varied nature of Brentham, working with the Council to get the best value for the existing budget. We may accept the standard (cheaper) steel lamps in some areas, but, if necessary, we should lobby for more cash to protect our special environment. We should also propose changes to the detailed plan to avoid siting and other mistakes

#### ACTION NOW:

- Undertake a new survey of all local streets
- Lobby Council officers
- Involve local councillors
- Co-operate with other organisations such as Hanger Hill Residents/Ealing Civic Society
- Present a petition
- Involve the media

Bob Gurd said that Tony had given an excellent summary of the options. He himself had been involved in extensive discussions on lighting and confirmed that the PFI contract was not for negotiation. Unless more money could be found, installation of heritage lamps in 'sensitive' roads could only be achieved by accepting standard 'hockey-stick' lamps in other roads.

Tony added that it might be possible to relocate some of the old lamps on iron columns to footpaths or greens.